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Drilling down to the grain in superdiversity

by

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DRILLING DOWN TO THE GRAIN IN SUPERDIVERSITY [1]

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This paper tackles the traditional split between sociolinguistics and second language research with a fine-grained but integrated account of linguistic form, language ideology and situated practice – what Silverstein calls the 'total linguistic fact' (TLF). Emphasising one or two of these dimensions to the exclusion of the third leaves us vulnerable to the default interpretations of SLA and sociolinguistics (erasing or romanticising our informants' political, rhetorical or linguistic positioning), but if we pursue the TLF, we can watch what happens in conditions of contemporary superdiversity, where the old predictabilities dissolve and forms, acts and social categories no longer co-occur in the patterns that we once expected. Distributionally, what once seemed 'foreign' may now sound local, and interactionally, we can watch close-up whether and how the indexical evocation of social types and stances succeeds despite only imperfect command of the vernacular forms with which these typifications have been canonically associated. The paper draws on a two-year ESRC-funded project in a London suburb where >40% of the population was born abroad, and explores these issues through interactional and variationist analyses of the stylistic practice of an adult who started to use English in his late 20s.

In the situations that the term 'superdiversity' is used to describe,[2] there has been a 'diversification of diversity'. The old binaries – minority/majority, migrant/host – no longer work, and there is widespread recognition that social and ethnic classification are now a serious problem both for social science and for public institutions. In socio- and applied linguistics, researchers are *philosophically* well-tuned to this, and the critiques of traditional concepts like 'native speaker', 'bilingual', 'speech community', or 'English' have wide currency. But how does this actually work through into the process of practical analysis? It is certainly clear that to get beyond the binaries and engage with the complexities of situated social identification, ethnography and indeed micro-ethnographic analysis are now necessary (Blommaert & Rampton 2011: Sections 2.3.6, 3.1, 3.2.1) – standard survey and experimental methods take too much for granted to be reliable. But how far down into the smallest particles do we now need to drill in order to grasp the communicative ramifications of superdiversity? What are the nitty-gritty challenges and implications when it comes to any nose-to-data examination of tiny strips of spoken interaction? Do we really have the tools to follow to challenge of superdiversity down, for example, into the analysis of individual sounds? Indeed, if we are operating in a potentially dizzying ambience of superdiversity, post-structuralism, late modernity etc etc, how do we even start to conceptualise what the job of really fine-grained linguistic description actually entails?

These are the issues addressed in this paper, and I shall start by taking Gumperz and Silverstein as my foundations. Gumperz argued early on that we need "closer understanding of how linguistic signs interact with social knowledge in discourse" (1982:29), and Silverstein formalised this as the 'total linguistic fact':

> "[t]he total linguistic fact, the datum for a science of language is irreducibly dialectic in nature. It is an unstable mutual interaction of meaningful sign forms, contextualised to situations of interested human use and mediated by the fact of cultural ideology" (1985:220; also Hanks 1996:230)

The proposal is linguistic forms, situated discourse and ideology need to be *analysed together*, without in any way conflating them,[3] and this actually isn't such a standard practice. So for example, in Variationist Sociolinguistics, there is attention to linguistic form and ideology (in work on attitudes & evaluation), but there is not much attention to situated interaction; Conversation Analysis focuses on interaction, cares about linguistic form but neglects ideology; in Critical Discourse Analysis, there is form and ideology, but not nearly enough on situated interactional processing; and in research on

Second Language Acquisition, there is form + interaction without ideology in the input and interaction tradition, and interaction + ideology without much sustained attention to linguistic form in the critical tradition. But so what if form, discourse & ideology aren't routinely treated together? Does this really matter?

I think that it does, because if analysts don't look empirically at the missing third element – whichever it happens to be – then they tend to fill the gap with the default assumptions characteristic of their sub-disciplines. Potentially crucial aspects of their informants' social, political, rhetorical or linguistic positioning are obscured, and this lets in the romantic celebration of difference and creative agency that has been so common in sociolinguistics, or the presumption of deficit and remedial need in SLA. With a neglect of proficiency with linguistic form, it is all too easy for specific instances of rhetorical success to tempt the sociolinguist to forget the longer term constraints that individuals face, while in SLA, informants are intuitively framed as 'learners' if there is no engagement with ideology. And in both cases, the outcome is a set of accounts that look increasingly removed from contemporary reality, obsessed (but inevitably also frustrated) by precisely the kind of simplistic caricature that 'superdiversity' alerts us to.

To illustrate the alternative – to try to overcome these blindspots and the reductive and inadequate portraits that they generate – I shall focus on a man who says that he really only started to speak English when he migrated from India to London in his late 20s. In the case-study presented here,

a) I will address the challenge of social classification by trying to locate this informant in the local speech economy, reckoning with the fact that long-standing transnational links can blur the boundaries between 'host' and 'migrant', so that what sounded 'foreign' 30 years ago may no longer do so today.[4] In other words, in the first instance, I'll resist the traditional practice of placing L2 speech and its associated unpredictabilities in a segregated category, hived off on their own.

After that,

b) my analysis will be guided by the principles of the 'total linguistic fact', looking closely at this man's stylistic performance, trying to identify some of the ideological categories, social scenes and stances he evokes through the non-referential, socially indexical possibilities of local English. In doing so, crucially, I will attend to the likelihood that in a second language, the formal, interactional and ideological dimensions of sociolinguistic sensibility develop at different rates, and I will try to demonstrate the importance of recognising that the abilities (i) to distinguish different social types, (ii) to recognise the ways of speaking associated with them, and then (ii) to reproduce them with the right linguistic forms *do not* develop all together at the same time.[5]

Together, these two goals chart a line between the Scylla of L2 exceptionalism and the Charybdis of sociolinguistic romanticisation. In the first, the refusal to separate L2 immigrants from L1 locals *a priori* is surely only reasonable recognition of the quotidian contemporary fact that there are a great many families and couples composed of people who grew up speaking different languages in different parts of the world. But with the second, I shall try to stay alert to issues of proficiency in my account of style – plainly, migration is often associated with an unequal distribution of material, cultural and linguistic resources, and it is important not to erase this either.

My data come from 2008-9 ESRC project *Dialect development & style in a diaspora community*, conducted with Devyani Sharma, Lavanya Sankaran, Pam Knight, and Roxy Harris, and it was based in Southall in West London, where in 2001, 48% of the 89,000 inhabitants were ethnically South Asian, 38% were white, 9% were black, and overall, *43% were born outside the UK*. In our study, there were approximately 75 mostly adult and mainly ethnic Punjabi informants, born both in Britain and abroad, and the focal informant here, Mandeep, came to London in 2001 aged 28. With Mandeep, our data-collection involved approximately 5 ½ hours of audio recordings – 2 interviews with Lavanya Sankaran, and 4 self-recordings (with a group of colleagues at work [one Anglo and several people born in India]; with an Indian-born friend; with a newly arrived relative; on his own in the car).

We can start to build an understanding of Mandeep's social and ideological positioning if we now turn to the interviews.

1. **What Mandeep told us in interview**

In interview, Mandeep told us he'd been a teacher in the Punjab, and he'd left India to find a better life. Soon after arriving, he'd found work as a news reader and editor in a local Southall Punjabi-language radio station, but now he was working there only part-time because he wanted to do post-graduate teacher training and first he had to do a year's maths enhancement course. He hadn't had any family in London when he'd arrived, but he'd known 3 or 4 people from home, and now he'd married a health care professional from India. His cultural taste in music and media hadn't changed, he said, but "it's developed... opened up new branches", and although he didn't get any spare time to watch the game, he said he'd support England in cricket against India - after all, there were now two Punjabis in each team (Harbhajan & Yuvraj *versus* Panesar & Bopara).

Mandeep said that he "wasn't speaking English at all" until he came to England aged 28, but actually, he'd had a lot of exposure to the language through study, and among other things, most of his MA in Economics had been in English. Since arriving in the UK, he'd done a year's GCSE in English, and he regarded soaps-with-teletext on British TV as a great resource for language learning. With the British-born English speakers on his maths course, he said "it's fine, you always mingle with them, talk with them, joke with them - obviously you don't know every single joke", but that's no reason for feeling "you are... being excluded". He didn't like it when people with Punjabi backgrounds born in Britain called him a 'freshie', but he was convinced that "if you are calibre enough, no one can stop you" and his stock reply was that at least he wasn't "worn out" and stale like them. With the Anglos in his Maths classes, he said he avoided the Punjabi pronunciation of his name, while with people who were weak in English but couldn't speak Punjabi, he'd _de_-anglicise his pronunciation of English. Lastly, he was conscious of social stratification in English speech:

> "accent is to do with... watching telly, talking to the other people... Sometimes, say in English, you're swearing a lot, and 'yo mate yo mate' or something you're doing, and then- you're glorifying yourself, some other people are glorifying you, then you develop that accent for the whole of your life. Then your family says, 'no, that's not the way how you speak'"

And dispositions like these weren't just restricted to Anglos:

> "the children of Indian sub-continent, [the] third generation... know other things as well – pub culture, these sorts of things – [and] now they are as bad as white partners and as good as white partners – they are now normals... of this country"

So to sum up before moving into an investigation of how Mandeep actually used English himself, there are at least three points to take from his interview commentary:
a) second language learning isn't just our own external analytic attribution: learning to speak English as an additional language had been a significant issue for Mandeep in London, even though English had also been important in his education in India
b) it is worth looking at at least <u>two</u> major axes of local sociolinguistic differentiation: not just Indian *vs* Anglo, or newcomer *vs* local, but also high *vs* low, posh *vs* vulgar
c) at the same time, it looks as though the stereotypic links between language, ethnicity and class have all been scrambled up, and we could go seriously wrong if we just accepted the traditional image of a minority ethnic L2 speaker migrating into a host society dominated by an L1 ethnic majority.
In fact, we will see the significance of Mandeep's residence among born-and-bred Londoners with family links to the Indian subcontinent if we now turn to a quantitative analysis of stylistic variation.

2. **Quantitative analysis of style-shifting across contexts**

In our analyses of style in Mandeep's English, we first carried out a quantitative variationist analysis of his style-shifting in three settings, conducting an auditory analysis of the use of Punjabi and Anglo variants in his English. Table 1 shows what we examined: Ls, Ts and the FACE & GOAT vowels, in

three contexts (self-recorded interaction with an Indian friend who was himself a fluent speaker of standard Indian English; one of the interviews with Sankaran (brought up in southern India and Singapore, and a non-speaker of Punjabi), and at work, conversing together with an Anglo L1 English speaking man and several L2 Indian English speaking women):

Table 1: Linguistic variables used in the analysis of Mandeep's situational style-shifting

Linguistic variable	Punjabi variant	Standard British English variant	Vernacular British English variant
(t) in the environments vt#, #tv and vtv (as in 'eigh<u>t</u>', '<u>t</u>ime', 'thir<u>t</u>y')	Retroflex [ʈ]	Alveolar [t]	Glottal [ʔ]
Post-vocalic (l) as in 'wi<u>ll</u>' or 'dea<u>l</u>'	Light [l]	Dark [ɫ]	
(e) – 'FACE' (e) as in 's<u>ay</u>' and 'g<u>a</u>me'	Monophthong [e]	Diphthong [eɪ]	
(o) – 'GOAT' as in 'd<u>o</u>n't' and 'r<u>oa</u>d'	Monophthong [o]	Diphthong [əʊ]	

What we found was that yes, there was quantitative style-shifting: Mandeep used most Punjabi variants with his Punjabi friend at home, and fewest at work (in the presence of an Anglo colleague), and this is broadly in line with the findings of other studies of L2 speech:

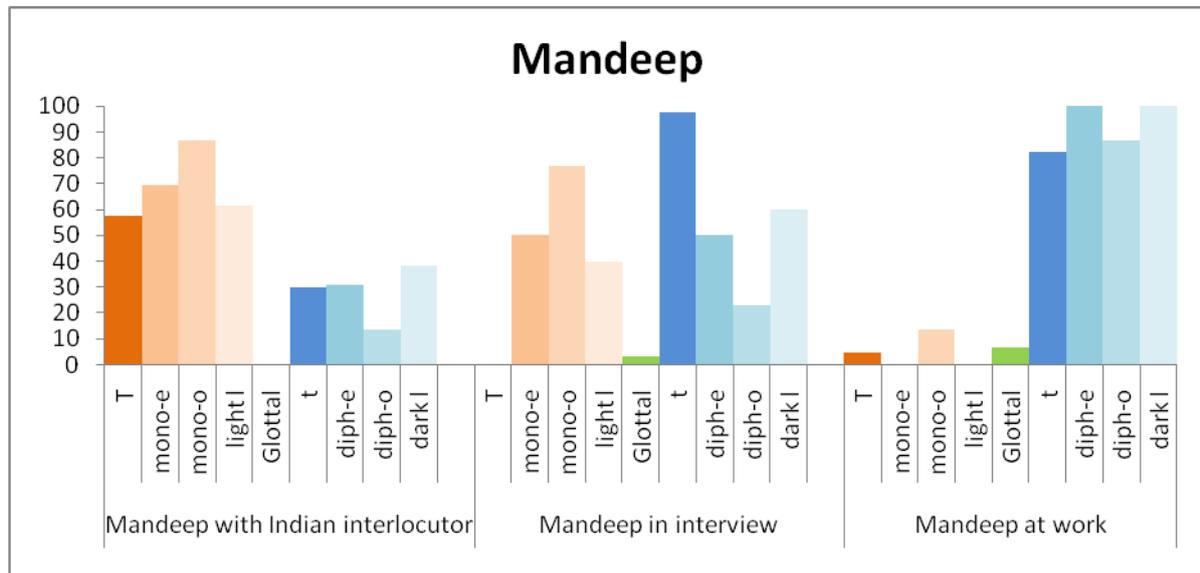*Figure 1:* Mandeep: Distribution of Punjabi and Anglo variants across three settings

Table 2: Mandeep's English with an Indian friend

	retro-flex ʈ	monoph-thong e	monoph-thong o	light l	glottal ʔ	t	diph-thong e	diph-thong o	dark l
%	57.5	69.2	86.7	61.5	0	30	30.8	13.3	38.5
Tokens	23	9	13	8	0	12	4	2	5
Total N	40	13	15	13	28	40	13	15	13

Table 3: Mandeep's English in interview

	retro-flex ʈ	monoph-thong e	monoph-thong o	light l	glottal ʔ	t	diph-thong e	diph-thong o	dark l
%	0	50	76.9	40	3.3	97.8	50	23.1	60
Tokens	0	7	10	6	1	44	7	3	9
Total N	45	14	13	15	30	45	14	13	15

Table 4: Mandeep's English in mixed white and Indian company at work

	retro-flex ʈ	monoph-thong e	monoph-thong o	light l	glottal ʔ	T	diph-thong e	diph-thong o	dark l
%	4.4	0	13.3	0	6.7	82.2	100	86.7	100
Tokens	2	0	2	0	2	37	15	13	15
Total N	45	15	15	15	30	45	15	15	15

The plot thickens, however, when we bring in other informants and discover that even though these other speakers have been speaking English since early childhood, the patterns are broadly similar. So for example, here are the bar-charts for Anwar, a British-born 40 year old who ran a successful local business and travelled a lot between London and Pakistan:

Figure 2: British-born Anwar: Distribution of Punjabi and Anglo variants across four settings. ('Family' here refers to his UK-born children.) *(apology to the reader: for some reason, my computer won't produce all the categories on the horizontal axis, but they should be the same as Figure 1!)*
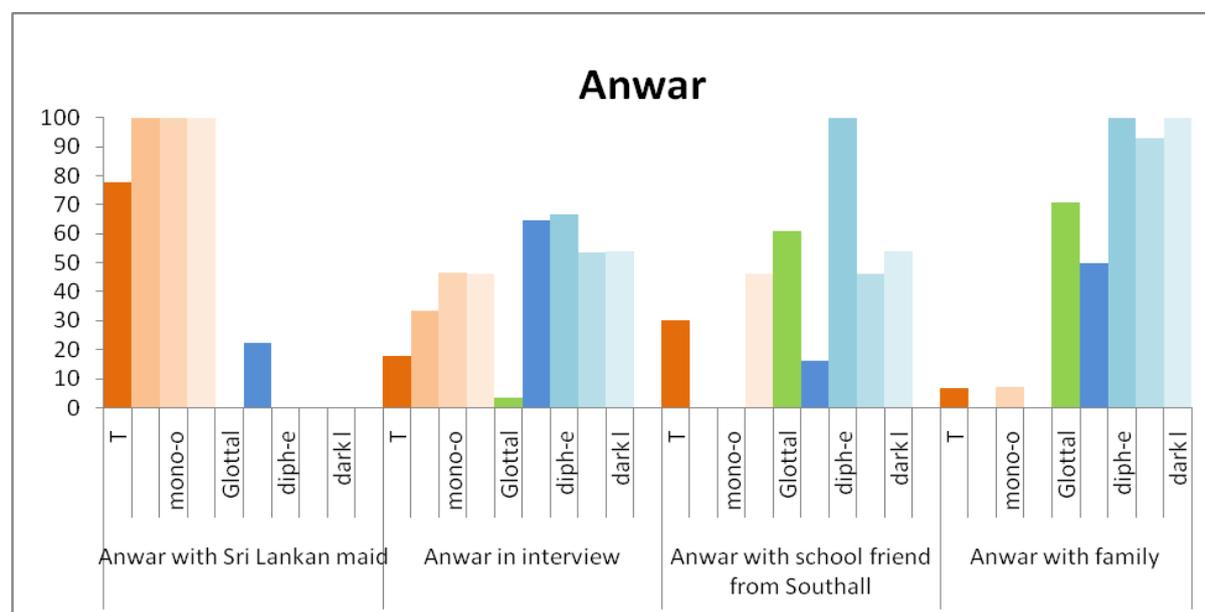
Mandeep is obviously different from Anwar in his non-use of glottal T, and I will return to this later. But before that, the comparison suggests that:
a) nowadays, retroflexion, postvocalic clear Ls and monophthonged 'FACE' and 'GOAT' vowels aren't foreign any longer in British-born London speech, so Mandeep wouldn't have to completely erase them in order to sound local;
b) the directionality of Mandeep's stylistic adjustment with these four variants was broadly in line with the directions of shift produced by people who have been speaking English all their lives, so

on the Anglo vs Indian axis of social differentiation, Mandeep's socio-stylistic sensibility seemed
to be roughly in tune with natal residents'.

In interview, Mandeep said that if you come from Punjab to Southall, "you won't feel like you are living abroad", and there is support for this in these quantitative analyses of style. In addition to the fact that Punjabi itself has a lot of local currency in Southall, the Britain-India link is inscribed in the patternings of *local* English.

Of course quantitative measures like this have clear limitations: there is no control for the talk's discursive development – for changes of footing, topic, genre etc – and if you just look at only four out of potentially umpteen linguistic variables, you can't tell whether overall, Mandeep's speech sounded more Anglo or more Indian at different times with different people. So let's now turn to some discourse.

3. Styling in narrative discourse

Mandeep told a lot of stories in his interviews with Lavanya Sankaran, and it was in the performance of character speech in stories that his accent became most Anglo. Here is an example from an account of the difficulties he had finding a job when he first arrived in England, where he found that all the employers were asking for experience, even in basic jobs:

Extract 1: 'okay wait wait'

Mandeep in interview with Lavanya Sankaran (female; aged 25-30). (Key: **Anglo variants**; *Punjabi variants*)

```
    1      ‗then I was saying
           [ðen ɑ wz seɪɪŋ]

    2      "↑\no: I don have any- \that sort of ex⌐perience"
           [nəʊ aɪ dõ hʌv əni dæt sɔtɒv əkspi:ɹɪəns]

    3      ↑so .hhh
           [sɒ]

➔   4      ⌐they were giving me "o:\kay:
           [d̪ᵉ vʌ gɪvɪŋ mɪ əʊkʰeɪ]

➔   5      (0.3) ⌐wait    ⌐wait"
                 weɪtʰ   weɪtʰ]

    6      and then ⁻after- (0.5) \two- (0.3)\two months
           [ən d̪ən ɑftˀə tˢʰu tʰu mʌns]
```

In line 5, Mandeep marks the difference between the narrating and the reported speech with shifts in tempo, becoming much slower in reported speech, and he renders the voice of the employers in exclusively British variants.

So Mandeep could do some pure Anglo, and indeed, the fact that he mixed Anglo and Punjabi features elsewhere in the story – for example, in line 2's "↑\no: I don have any- \that sort of ex⌐perience" – doesn't itself necessarily mark Mandeep as an L2 speaker. Mixing occurred even in the relatively formal English of Punjabis born and raised in the UK, and we can see this, for example, in Anwar's business talk with an RP-speaking barrister (cf Rampton 2011c):

> **th**e **reason** why I ca***lll***a**d** you is e::h I jus wa**nted to let** you **know th**a**t**
>
> *((name))* he came.. and e::h we **decided** ***n***o**t** ***t***a*u* pursue **h**is case

Even so, when we looked across our dataset more generally, there were very clear differences in the length of the utterances in which Mandeep and Anwar maintained exclusively Anglo-accented character speech: whereas Anwar produced one stretch of almost completely Anglo-sounding multi-clause direct speech that lasted 29 syllables, Mandeep's exclusively Anglo-accented voicing never exceeded twelve, and as we shall see, it was actually rather rare to find a consistent separation of Anglo and Punjabi forms in the speech of the figures in his narratives.

Of course that itself raises a question: if Mandeep's "**o:**₍**kay:** (0.3) ₍**wait** ₍**wait**" was actually rather rare in the consistency of its phonological anglicisation, how did he actually manage to style narrative character speech as distinctly Anglo? If his mobilisations of linguistic code resources were somewhat unpredictable, how did he achieve stylistic effects?

To address this, we should now turn to his stylisation of the local Anglo-English vernacular, moving from an Anglo-Indian axis of differentiation to socially stratified class styles. As we do so, we will begin to see how important it is to address linguistic forms, discourse and ideology each in their own right.

4. Styling vernacular

In the interviews, there were signs of Mandeep's class consciousness when he talked about 'pub culture' and linked accent to watching telly, swearing and behaving in ways that got you into trouble with your family. How far did this translate into his own dramatised speech performances, and with what kinds of rhetorical success?

The excerpt below forms part of an argument that people make too much of a fuss about racism, and that you shouldn't overgeneralise about racism on the basis of single incidents. In it, Mandeep is presenting the hypothetical scenario of a white man shouting racist abuse:

Extract 2: Sun reader (MI.50.01, 0.59.9)

Mandeep in interview with Lavanya Sankaran. (Key: **Anglo variants**; ***Punjabi variants***)

```
1 Mndp: if ₍someone jus t misbe₍haves wi th you
2        .hh ↑`someone ₍drunk ₍whi te ₍person and uh (.)
3        .hhhh you are just ₍passing by or ₍some th ing,
4        he ₍saw you
5        ((pitch step-up and shift to non-modal phonation:))
➔        ↑"you `bloody ᴵAsians ᴵwhy you ᴵcome to ᴵmy  ᴵcoun t ry"
6        or some th ing
7        ((high pitched:)) ↑↑thats not `racism-
8        ⁻th at's- he::- .hh m ay  be ᴵreading ᴵS u n `only (0.5)
9        ᴵso: m- m- he m ay be just `listeni:ng a₍bou:t s-som-₍so:me like
10       ((shift in voice quality similar to line 5:))
11       ((non-modal phonation on first three words:))
         " `why ᴵth ey ᴵca me to our ᴵcountry"
12       e- ᴵhe ᴵm ay ᴵno t `kn ow (.)
13       ((faster:)) ***what th***e e ᴵc onomy is
14       wha **t th**e  **c** ontribution of .hhh
15 LS:   [As-
```

```
15 Mndp: [ˋmigɾant  ˈpeople to ˈBriɗish eˈconomy is-
16       so ˊhe dɒn know ↑↑anyↄˋthing
17       ˈh:e jus ↑ˈshouting a ᵛyou and then ˊˋswearing ˏeven
```

Mandeep describes the character as ignorant, drunk, uncouth, informed only by the (very low brow) popular press – in effect, as a stereotypical lower class white racist. In line 5, the segmental phonology in his performance of the man's speech sounds more Anglo than Indian in line 5 - ↑"you ˋbloody ˈAsians ˈwhy you ˈcome to ˈmy ˈcountry" But does it sound more *vernacular*? Here it is again in a more detailed transcript:

Extract 3:
    ((*pitch step-up with shift to tense muscular phonation*)):
    "↑you ˋbloody ˈAsians ˈwhy youˈ come to ˈmy ˈcountry"
    [ju   bᵘɫʌdi: eɪʃn̩z waɪ ju kʰʌm tʊ mɑɪ kʼʌntɹi:]

Segmentally, the onsets of the diphthongs in 'Asian' and 'why' sounded RP, as they lacked the backed vowel quality of traditional working class London,[6] and in fact there was also a detectably Punjabi influence in *country*'s unaspirated word-initial consonant. Even so, there are lots of semiotic cues showing that Mandeep was aiming for more than just ordinary British:
- segmentally, the onset of the diphthong in 'my' was relatively backed, as in popular London speech;[7]
- "you bloody Asians" is also very marked supra-segmentally with abruptly raised pitch and tenser muscular non-modal phonation. This gives the impression of shouting without actually doing so, and when this is linked to swearing, it is often typed as vulgar;
- in addition, of course, Mandeep used an explicit metalanguage of social types to characterise the speech/speaker both before and after ('drunk', 'white', 'reading *Sun*').

So even though the segmental phonetics weren't especially vernacular, this wasn't rhetorically incapacitating. Yes, if you *extracted* this impersonation of a 'white London lout' from its narrative context, it probably wouldn't carry very far, and the groups and networks where it would be rated or even recognised for what is intended, might be limited. But within the specific narrative world and narrating event in which it was produced, the social typification worked reasonably well, and the voice can be heard as Anglo vernacular English.[8]

So even though Mandeep wasn't terribly good at doing traditional London vernacular vowels and consonants, he knew that they sounded different and he didn't mind trying to impersonate it. In fact, there is other evidence that he was aware of vernacular London features without accurately reproducing them, and here we can also see that his apprehension of the vernacular's connotational potential extended beyond social group stereotypes to typifications of stance.

In his interview comments on accent, Mandeep linked 'swearing a lot' to saying 'yo mate yo mate', and in fact he pronounced 'mate' as "yo [meɪ] yo [meɪ]". In contemporary vernacular London, the post-vocalic T in 'mate' is a glottal, not an alveolar stop, and it looks as though Mandeep got half-way – he removed the alveolar, but didn't replace it with the glottal, doing a zero realisation instead. In fact, the quantitative style-shifting analysis showed that he hardly ever produced glottal Ts – 3 out of 88 possible realisations (Tables 2-4), and Sharma & Sankaran's survey showed that he was very similar in this to a great many other informants born in India.[9] But this didn't stop Mandeep using zero T strategically in constructed dialogue.

In the excerpt below, Mandeep is continuing the argument that accusations of racism are often exaggerated. He has just been talking about the notorious Shilpa Shetty episode in *Celebrity Big Brother*, and he has taken the line that when the other contestants criticised Shilpa for touching some food, they weren't being racist – the complaint was "just normal talk". He now follows this up with a

story about being ticked off by his mum when he was small, the overall point being that there is very little to distinguish these two episodes:

Extract 4: Spoiled carrots (cf Extract 5; MI.50.01, 0.59.9)
    Mandeep in interview with Lavanya Sankaran. (Key: **Anglo variants**; *Punjabi variants*)

```
        33     one ˎday (.)
               .hh J was ˈvery ˋliᴛᴛle (.)
                   [ɑ]        [w]       [t]

        34     and er my mum ˌboughᴛ some ˎcarroᴛs (.)
                                         [t]            [t]
        35     an I puᴛ ˈall ᴛhe ˋcaᴙᴙiᴛs in::- (.)
                   [aɪ][t][ɔ̡̈ɫ d̪ə]    [ɾ][t]

        36     er- as ˈouᴛside in- on ᴛhe ˋsand
                          [t]

        37     so I ˈspoiled ˋeveryᴛhing
                          [d]         [t̪ʰ]

        38     so ˈshe ˈsla:pped ˋme (.)

        39 L: ((very quiet laugh:)) hehe

        40 M: ((half-laughing in 'bought' and 'that':))

  ➔    41     ᴛhaᴛ “ˈI    ˈbough ˈᴛha fo  ˈus              1.04
               [d̪ætʰ aɪ   bᵊhɔ:ø d̪æø ɸɔ:ʷ ʌs]

        42     (0.2)

  ➔    43     a:nd ˈyou pu ᴛhe ˋeveryᴛhing aˌway” (.)
               [ænd jɪu puø‿d̪ə? evɹɪt̪ʰɪŋ    ?əweɪ]

        44     hh ˉso
                   [əʊ]

        45     th- th- th- ↑ᴛha s noᴛ ˋracism (.)
                           [d̪æøs]  [ø]

        46     ˉᴛha s ˋsimpℓe ˈᴛalk as ˌweℓℓ
                 [ø]

        47     ˉand that was the- (0.2)

        48     and ˋother thing is
               ((Mandeep continues about another aspect))
```


The distribution of alveolar and zero Ts is shown in table 5.

Table 5: Realisation of the post-vocalic Ts in Mandeep's 'spoiled carrots' story:

Environ-ments	The setting, events & actions leading up to the reprimand (lines 33-38)			The reprimand in direct reported speech (lines 41-43)			The evaluation (lines 44-46)		
	[t]	[ʔ]	[ø]	[t]	[ʔ]	[ø]	[t]	[ʔ]	[ø]
V_#C, V_#V, V_C	7/7	0	0	0	0	3/3	0	0	3/3

In the part leading up to the reprimand, there are 7 potentially variable T sounds, and all of them are alveolar.[10] But in the direct reported reprimand in lines 41-43, all three Ts are zero realisations ('bough[ø]', 'tha[ø]', 'pu[ø]'), and after that, the zero realisations are carried into the evaluation in lines 45-46 ('tha[ø]', 'no[ø]', 'tha[ø]').

Now in the quoted utterance in lines 41 & 43, Mandeep's approximations of vernacular London contribute to a character portrait that is very different from the white working class figure in the Sun reader episode. Here, the speaker is Mandeep's mum; she is saying the kind of thing that Mandeep approves of ('simple talk' that only the misguided would read as racism); and indeed in its incorporation of zero Ts in the evaluation, there is a 'fusion' of the narrating and the quoted voices.[11] So if it is not just unruly working class types that Mandeep is trying to index with the concentration of zero-Ts in lines 41-43, what is it? If we turn back to *Anwar* and look back at the quantitative data on Anwar's style-shifting, T-glottaling increased with family and friends (Figure 2), and of course this pattern is repeated not just with other locally born individuals in our survey, but in British society much more generally. Vernacular forms often index not only types of person but also types of stance and relationship, and in the quoted speech in the carrots-story, the glottal-T approximations seem designed to evoke the intimacy or informality of a mother-son relationship,[12 13] a relationship which Mandeep seemed quite happy to inhabit. So yes, Mandeep's reproduction of the linguistic specifics of emblematic vernacular English forms is only partial, but his grasp of the social meaning *isn't* restricted to the stereotypes of people and groups that you might expect with speech styles seen from afar.

Which is not to say that the partiality of this approximation was itself cost-free, or that the impersonation was as effective as it had been with the white lout in the earlier extract. Compared with the extract earlier, there is very little supplementary characterisation of Mandeep's mum in the tale of spoiled carrots, and the sociolinguistic iconography associated with 'mums' is generally much more indeterminate. Admittedly, low levels of T-glottaling are common in the English of local people born in India, so local people born in India might well constitute a social network where the social indexicality of the zero-Ts in the 'carrots' narrative could be easily appreciated.[14] But beyond those networks – and maybe even within – Mandeep's stylised performance of his mum sounds odd rather than indexically resonant, and it certainly took our research team quite a lot of time and analysis to generate a plausible interpretation of the social typification being attempted.

Let's now move to a more general discussion.

5. Discussion

In this attempt to address superdiversity's challenge to traditional schemes of classification, I have focused on someone with close personal experience of L2 learning, but instead of categorising him as a 'learner' right from the start, I have tried to identify his position in sociolinguistic space empirically, using the total linguistic fact as my guiding framework. So where have we finally arrived? Where can we now place Mandeep in the local sociolinguistic economy, and what analytical moves have we made in order to put him there?

To construct the broad overview of the local sociolinguistic space that an enterprise like this obviously needs from the outset, Sharma and Sankaran's variationist survey has been an absolutely vital resource, and we have brought the L1/L2 issue into focus by comparing relatively recent arrival Mandeep with Anwar, who was born and raised in London. There certainly were a number of clear differences in their English: Anwar used more phonetic variants (e.g. glottal Ts); his repertoire covered a wider range of English styles (Cockney, standard Indian English, Indian English foreigner talk, and London multi-ethnic vernacular); and he did much more with his shifts of style – while Mandeep's shifts were concentrated in short strips of artful stylisation, Anwar's accomplished a lot of different footing changes, including routine ones like the shift from business to personal matters, or from greeting to reason-for-call in phone conversations etc (see Rampton 2011c).[15] Even so, there are at least three reasons why it would be wrong to locate Mandeep as an L2 speaker outside the London sociolinguistic economy, aspirationally looking in.

First, there was his explicit self-positioning: in the interviews, he positioned himself as a now-established citizen of multi-ethnic London, and among other things, he dismissed white racism as just lower class ignorance, siding with the Anglos criticising Shilpa Shetty.

Second, there are the similarities between Mandeep's stylistic practices and Anwar's, which invite us to treat both of them together as *active participants in broadly the same sociolinguistic space.* This is a space formed at the historical intersection of (a) socio-economic stratification within the UK on the one hand, and (b) migration and movement between Britain and the India subcontinent on the other. In this space, class and ethnic processes have drawn different sets of linguistic forms, practices and evaluations into the environment, and over time, these sociolinguistic forms and practices have been configured in a series of conventionalised contrasts – Punjabi vs English, vernacular vs standard English, high vs low, foreigner vs local (see Rampton 2011a). Of the two informants in focus, yes Anwar was more fully engaged with the stylistically differentiated positions in this sociolinguistic economy, but Mandeep was also tuned to these schemata, and although his reproduction of the high-low, standard-vernacular binary traditional in Anglo English was much more limited than Anwar's, he was clearly aware of it and obviously not averse to exploring it rhetorically. In addition, Mandeep could also exploit the contrast between Punjabi- and Anglo-accented English, and in the comparison with Anwar, we've seen (i) that they shared some of the linguistic forms that displayed a quantitative sensitivity to the Anglo- or Indian-ness of the setting, and (ii) that the directionalities of style-shift were broadly similar.[16]

Third, if we widen our lens, it is also important to reemphasise that the Punjabi/Anglo contrast wasn't simply confined to people born abroad. It was itself widespread and well-established as a local practice, and *in addition*, Sharma and Sankaran have shown that over time, the presence of people like Mandeep have made a major contribution to the development of this (2011b).

So even though Mandeep only started to speak the language as an adult, he displayed a practical sensitivity to key dimensions of local English sociolinguistic structure, and it is obvious that a label like "immigrant learner of English" doesn't do justice to his position in the local London speech economy.

But what of the analytic moves that have brought us to this conclusion?

First and most obviously, we consciously avoided the *a priori* separation of L1 and L2 English speakers in our variationist survey, and discovered that L1 speakers don't talk quite as we might have expected. So plainly, if anyone wants to talk about a 'target language', it is essential to be rather careful, both in a specification of the forms that compose the 'target', and in an assessment of the linguistic distance that newcomers would need to travel to reach it.

But then after that, for the second language speech itself, it has been vital to slow right down, looking at stylistic moves individually, breaking them down into the linguistic forms, discursive acts and socio-ideological typifications that compose them, considering each of these in turn, and then looking at the effects of their combination. As a result of this 'nano-analysis', we have developed a rather nuanced picture of Mandeep's L2 English, showing how it forms part of larger sociolinguistic structures and processes, *without*, I hope, either erasing or exaggerating the differences and limitations. So with Extract 4, we have seen that a grasp of the indexical relationship between stance and vernacular style needn't be matched by accurate reproduction of the canonical structural forms, and this could make the interpretation quite tricky. At the same time, Extract 2 showed that an

imperfect grasp of vernacular Anglo forms *wasn't* automatically an expressive handicap in the impersonation of a lower class white man.

As I suggested at the outset, linguistics has not been very good when it comes to *humanising* migrants, seeing them in their embedded complexity as mothers, brothers, uncles, friends and workmates who also make agentive contributions to local sociolinguistic processes. Yes, it is quite easy to focus on the structural details of second language speech, or alternatively, to study the impact of newcomers as ideological emblems, uniting long-term residents in opposition. But the old categories and distinctions cannot account for the generative splits and alignments emerging in contemporary urban environments, and we need to be very careful about the *a priori* distinctions we build into our research. But there is a route past these premature reifications, celebrations and exclusions in the total linguistic fact, or at least that is what I have tried to argue in this analysis.

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Transcription conventions

Segmental phonology
[   ]   IPA phonetic transcription
text   English pronounced with Anglo variants
text   English pronounced with Punjabi variants

Intonation
\   low fall
/   low rise

\	high fall
/	high rise
∨	fall rise
∧	rise fall
ǀ	high stress
‾	high unaccented prenuclear syllable
↑	pitch step-up
↓	pitch step-down

Conversational features

(.)	micro-pause
(1.5)	approximate length of pause in seconds
[	overlapping turns
[	
CAPITALS	loud
.hh	in-breath
>text<	more rapid speech
ᵒtextᵒ	quietly spoken
( )	speech inaudible
(text)	speech hard to discern, analyst's guess
((text:))	'stage directions'
"text"	direct reported speech
➔	words and utterances of particular interest to the analysis

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NOTES

[1] Much fuller and more fully referenced treatments of this dataset can be found in Rampton 2011b and forthcoming/2013.

[2] "Super-diversity: a term intended to underline a level and kind of complexity surpassing anything the country has previously experienced… a dynamic interplay of variables including country of origin,… migration channel,… legal status,… migrants' human capital (particularly educational background), access to employment,…locality… and responses by local authorities, services providers and local residents" (Vertovec 2007:2-3)

[3] Hanks notes the risks: "It is tempting, depending upon one's own commitments, to try to treat activities as if they were formal systems, or language structure as if it were no more than the temporary product of activity, or ideology as merely the projection of verbal categories or the misconstrual of action. But all such attempts distort their object by denying its basic distinctiveness. The challenge… is not reduction of this to a by-product of that but integration of distinct phenomena into a more holistic framework" (1996:231-2).

[4] Blommaert, Collins & Slembrouck note, "[p]rocesses such as diaspora [that] develop over long spans of time... result in *lasting*... social,... sociolinguistic and discursive reconfigurations which have effects across a wide range of situations" (2005:201)

[5] According to Kramsch, "imagined identities, projected selves, idealisations or stereotypes of the other... seem to be central to the language-learning experience [even though...] they are difficult to grasp within the current paradigms of SLA research" (2009:5)

[6] [eɪ], not [ʌɪ], and [aɪ], not [ɒɪ]

[7] [ɑɪ], not [aɪ]

[8] Admittedly, immediate audience response would be the best indication of the success of Mandeep's performances. Audible laughter followed Mandeep's quoted speech performances elsewhere, and there were

other signs of the story recipient's involvement: laughter elsewhere, and supportive intervention at moment of disfluency. So overall, it sounded as though the interview was enjoyable for both participants, but in the absence of a video-record, it is impossible to track the impact of all Mandeep's narrative performances in any detail, and we have to rely on the more distantiated analytic assessment offered above.

[9] Across the wider population we sampled, glottal Ts were very rare among people born in India, more common among Punjabi-descended people born in the UK in the 1960s, and very often used by those UK-born in the 1980s (Sharma & Sankaran 2010). The analysis of glottal-T involved 18 informants born in India (9F, 9M), 10 born in the UK in the 1960s (6F, 4M), and 14 born in the UK in the 1980s (6F, 8M). The results are shown in Table 6:

Table 6: T-glottaling by generation:
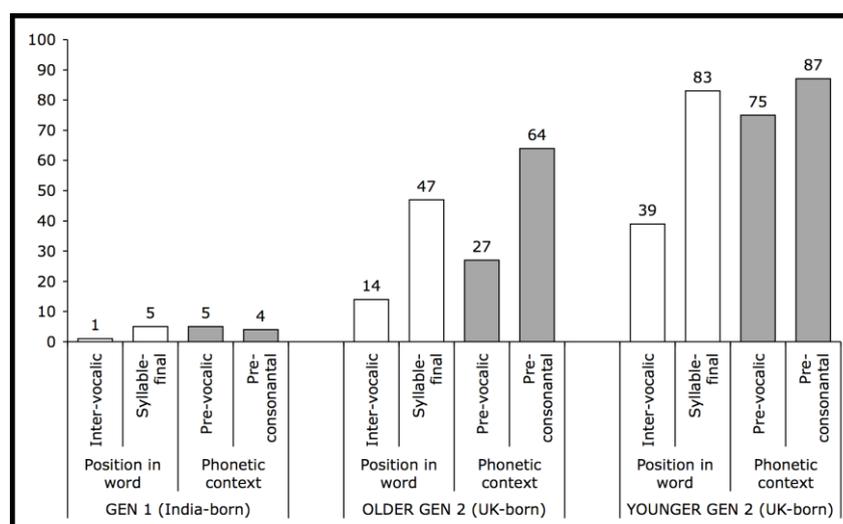
[10] lines 33-38: 'li[t]le', 'bough[t]', 'carro[t]s', 'pu[t]', 'carro[t]s', 'ou[t]side' 'tha[t]'

[11] Bakhtin 1984:199

[12] As we know from other data that his mum has always lived in India and only talks to Mandeep in Punjabi, we can be confident that it isn't an accurate copy of her speech.

[13] In another rendering of a scolding from his mum later in the interview, Mandeep brought off a glottal T: "If I have to shou[t] at my wife so I will be getting a shou[t] from my mum 'how dare you to say tha[ʔ]' yea so it is always good" *((laughter from interviewer))* (MI627 39.58).

[14] Elicitations tests could be developed to investigate this (cf Gumperz 1982:31).

[15] We could probably put this down to differences in their early language socialisation, as well as to differences in the personal milieux in which they each operated.

[16] More Punjabi variants of (o), (e), (l) and (t) with speakers of English brought up in South Asia, and more Anglo ones with people brought up in England.